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FESTIVAL OF THE THREE CHOIRS.

(From "The Daily Telegraph.")

Hereford, Tuesday, Sept. 8.

This week the city from which I write celebrates the hundred and sixty-second meeting of the choirs of Hereford, Gloucester, and Worcester, in aid of widows and orphans of clergy belonging to the three dioceses. It is scarcely needful to point out that the occasion is less a combination of cathedral choirs than a fully appointed musical festival, in which the ecclesiastical singers are but a subordinate element. But, though the first idea has been departed from, the original name remains to form a link between the present and the past. Whoever remembers the attitude of Hereford towards the festival as now carried on when certain clerics of Worcester tried to revert to the magnified religious service, must be prepared for much that I have to say. The little city on the Wye has always been in the van of progress and beneficial reform, thereby setting a good example to the sister towns, which, as a rule, are either too proud or too indolent to follow on the same course. Years ago, Hereford added a concert of chamber music to the festival programme. It was the first to give an evening performance of oratorio in the cathedral, and now the managers are further distinguishing themselves by issuing shilling tickets for that particular occasion, so that the working classes may participate in an edifying solemnity. But this is not all. Hereford stands before other towns in England in respect of making its festival a town's matter.

The programme of the present festival is largely made up of standard works—a contrast, and not an unpleasant one, to the rain of novelties that deluged us at Birmingham. In judging of this matter it is necessary to consider the existence of very different circumstances. Between the resources of Birmingham and Hereford there can be no comparison. But this is not the main point. The public which support the festival at Birmingham expect and demand new works as a chief feature. Here different circumstances prevail. There is no such expectation and no such demand, amateurs not yet satiated with opportunities of hearing standard works preferring that such should be given in place of any others. The managers seek to meet the taste of their patrons in this regard; doing so properly and wisely, not only because they thus secure the best pecuniary results, but also because nothing save good can come from the hearing and re-hearing of masterpieces.

Much depends upon the weather at these festivals, and great was the satisfaction given by a fair morning, which displayed the old city to advantage in its gala dress. His worship the Mayor, whose zeal cannot be over-praised, had arranged another procession to the Cathedral, but in this instance circumstances were not propitious. Mr Morley anticipated a gathering of citizens as well as members of the municipality, and, to make the show a braver one, engaged a military band. I regret to say that the worthy burghers held aloof, leaving to their chosen representatives whatever honours were to be won. Happily the Hereford Corporation can make a decent display alone and unaided. It boasts a number of uniformed servants, three or four silver maces, a sword of justice, and an official whose duty it is to wear a huge scarlet cloak most brilliant of hue. All this, with the red-coated musicians in advance, was quite gay enough for the occasion, and helped to "inaugurate" the festival in a fitting manner. The morning service was attended by a large congregation, eager, as usual, to hear the united choirs of the three Cathedrals. I cannot but think that those among the congregation who expected much must have gone away disappointed. The muster of the choirs was far from complete—or else their full numbers are very scanty—the music performed was not the best available, and the manner of its rendering might have been better. On such an occasion a special effect is rightly called for, and should the more assuredly be forthcoming, because this opening service affords the only conspicuous opportunity for the chorus to show what they can do. Dr Langdon Colborne's "Te Deum" and "Benedictus" in C were chosen, and here, also, I have to point out a mistake. The music possesses merit undoubtedly; now and then a happy point being made, but it is in no way representative of English church composition, and only that which is representative has any right to be heard at a great festival. Sir Gore Onseley's Anthem, "Great is the Lord," had a more obvious *raison d'être*, but even this might have stood aside to make room for one of the works that conspicuously adorn the musical repertory of the Church of England. While in critical mood, I may as well go on to wonder how it is that English organists on these occasions of ceremony prefer to extemporize "voluntaries" rather than perform set pieces. A pompous march should have signaled the entrance of the civic authorities this morning, but did not, and an opportunity which no French or German organist would have let slip was consequently lost. The circumstance, however, reflects not at all upon the skill of the performer (Mr Williams, of Gloucester), who, I am bound to state, did

his duty as an accompanist very admirably. With regard to the festival sermon, preached by the Rev. Prebendary Poole, there is not much to say. The rev. gentleman put aside altogether the musical questions which invited his attention, and confined himself to a consideration of the needs of the poorer clergy. His discourse may fairly be described as remarkable for the cogency of its argument and the boldness of its suggestions. At the close of the service a blessing was pronounced by the Bishop of Hereford, and soon thereafter the city streets were once more animated by the glories of civic state.

The cathedral had not long been emptied of one congregation before it filled with another, to whom Mendelssohn's *Elijah* was a source of special attraction. That great oratorio again exerted its never-failing power, and received the customary reverent and admiring attention. In accordance with a custom recently established amid general approval, the performance was preceded and followed by a short form of prayer, the clergy, including the dean and bishop, occupying special stalls in the nave for that purpose. Quite apart from the propriety of incorporating the oratorio into an act of worship, there is a distinct advantage to the work itself—an advantage arising out of the emotional attitude in which it is received. The music and its subject acquire fresh significance, not only from the religious edifice, but also from the influence of devotion, and this is why oratorio at the festival of the Three Choirs seems to have gained in impressiveness since the change of which I speak was made. With regard to the actual rendering of *Elijah*, I need not be precise. Mendelssohn's work is expected to run well of itself under festival conditions, and did so with very few drawbacks. It served to show what a fine English orchestra Dr Colborne has before him, and what a splendid chorus occupy the benches above. A better choir, judging by the work done in *Elijah*, I rarely hear, either as respects balance of tone or the combination of sweetness and strength in its *ensemble*. The solos were safe in the hands of Mme Albani, Miss Anna Williams, Mme Enriquez, Mme Patey, Mr Lloyd, Mr Brereton, and Mr Santley, each of whom made an impression more or less marked. Greater contrast of light and shade would have improved Mme Albani's "Hear ye, Israel," but otherwise her effort was irreproachable. Mme Patey was grandly impressive in the part of Jezebel. Mme Enriquez showed a high degree of excellence in "Voe unto them," and Messrs Lloyd and Santley—both in capital voice—were as nearly perfect as is possible to great skill and deep artistic sympathy.

This evening's concert in the Shire Hall had a crowded audience, thanks to the liberal policy of the committee, who provided a certain number of shilling seats. These were eagerly occupied, and it was, indeed, pleasant to see the working men and women who for the first time had the festival music brought within their reach. Hereford is true to its traditions in making this new departure, and will assuredly find the reward of well-doing. The concert opened with Beethoven's *Fidelio* overture, very little of which could be heard owing to the noise and bustle of late arrivals. I read in the programme-book, "No person will be permitted to enter or leave the room during the performance of any piece"—a most salutary rule, and there only remains to hope that the attendants will for the rest of the week have the courage to enforce it, even against a host of county and civic magnates. The principal work in the evening's list was Dr Joseph Smith's new cantata, *St Kevin*. I shall defer its consideration, as there is much to say, till to-morrow, when the task can be discharged at leisure. Enough now that the very considerable difficulties of the work greatly affected the performance, in which there were many blemishes. The chorus sang bravely and deserved great praise; while Miss Anna Williams, Mr Harper Kearton, and Mr Brereton were fairly successful with mostly ungrateful solos. The composer conducted, and at the close received the applause which comes to all men in his position whether they deserve it or not.

In the second part of the programme were Mozart's Symphony in D, the so-called No. 5, and a selection of songs and choral pieces, none of which call for remark. Only the last two movements of the symphony were played.

Wednesday, Sept. 9.

Dr Joseph Smith, composer of the cantata, *St Kevin*, is young, and, as frequently happens with youth, needs corrective treatment. Since William Pitt made his famous answer when charged with the "abominable crime of being a young man," the offence in question has rarely provoked a prosecution. Immaturity, indeed, has been so indulged that it presumes upon itself and often affects to lead where it should follow with humility and teachableness. I am not sure, from the indications of his work, but that Dr Joseph Smith supplies a case in point, but he shall receive from me the benefit of the doubt. I acquit him of presumption, and shall deal with him as a victim to the mere venial errors of youth, such as deficient know-

of his own powers, weakness of judgment in determining the "more excellent way," and boldness that, by passing the bounds of rashness, becomes almost criminal. Some reader may ask here, "Is it worth while to treat in a form so serious a person whose fame, if he enjoy any at all, is but local." The question goes to the root of the matter, since it challenges the existence in Dr Smith of talent that by possibility may blossom and bear good fruit. My reply is that the Dublin musician ought not to be ignored. Through the crudities—I had almost written the absurdities—of his work it is easy to make out evidences of varied power, the germs of good which kindly influences may develop in time to come. In such a case as this the responsibility of criticism is onerous. It would be far from difficult to ridicule *St Kevin* out of existence, and the temptation to make a point in doing so is unquestionably great. But how if what is good in the composer be crushed also?—how if, on the other hand, he be goaded to despair, or, on the one, roused to persistence in the very course which he should abandon? It is this consideration which gives the critic pause and determines him towards the more healthful process of courteously pointing out defects for the sake of the potential ability he discerns.

Before referring to the music of the new cantata, let me indicate the sort of legend and poem upon which Dr Smith fixed his choice. *St Kevin*, as here shown, plays the part of an Irish *St Anthony*. The youth has thrown in his lot with "virgin saints and holy men," but the prize of his soul is too valuable for the Evil One to lose without a struggle. To the end of his downfall, therefore, Kathleen, a chieftain's daughter, not only falls in love with him but takes the heroic course of following him to his cell for a purpose expressed by herself as follows:

"Beneath thy holy roof to dwell,
A lone and timid stranger;
And watch thee in thy lonely cell,
In sickness and in danger."

Kevin, whose knowledge of human nature is, doubtless, more complete than that of the maiden, persuades her to depart, but, darkness having fallen, she induces him to let her remain till morning. We are told by the poet that

"All that night young Kevin's brain
Was filled with thoughts unholy."

Matters reach a climax in the morning. Kevin is on the verge of breaking his holy vows when the notes of a "Requiem" are heard. Instantly becoming master of himself, the saint

"Flies that valley fair,
That lake, and mountain hoary."

But he reckons without Kathleen. She flies too, and after him, presently discovering the godly youth asleep

"Deep within the jagged cliff."

Kevin is not only asleep, but dreaming—apparently a favourite nocturnal occupation. In a vision he sees his way to heaven barred by the persistent young woman on whom his eyes rest as he opens them in affright. Kathleen begs him not to kill her, and the saint holds his hand for a time, even going to sleep again—a rather extraordinary proceeding, under the circumstances. The dream returns, and now *St Kevin* makes an end of temptation by hurling Kathleen into the lake below. A sufficiently tragic and criminal ending is here, but the poet assures us that had the temptation succeeded,

"She ne'er had been an angel bright,
Nor he a victor holy."

So the end sanctifies the means, and all is for the best. I need scarcely add that the story lends itself to musical treatment. Dr Smith, however, might have done better than take a poetic version which retains the same rhythm throughout, and suffers from defects more serious than those of structure. The verses are feeble and commonplace, never once expressing the passion or rising to the exaltation of their subject.

Coming to the music, I should first state that Dr Smith makes free use of what he calls "those distinctive peculiarities which belong to Irish National Melody." In this he is quite right. The greatest composers have given their sanction to the use of what may be termed "dialects," as distinguished from the classic language of their art, and if the course be allowable at any time it is surely so when a national legend has to be treated. In the present case, however, the matter is open to decision solely on the ground of effect. Nearly all the charm that the music possesses is connected with the Irish element, and the fact may stand as sufficient justification, if any be needed. Taking a general view of the work, apart from the feature just indicated, we find a double aspect. Certain numbers—as, for example, a hunting chorus and a soprano air, "What hasty foot has early been"—are of an ordinary and conventional type, and, in their way, good enough for praise. In the garb of conventionality,

and as a composer maintaining himself at a moderate altitude, Dr Smith makes a creditable, if not a striking figure. But, unfortunately, he only drops into this now and then, as Mr Silas Wegg used to drop into poetry from the elevation of Gibbon's "Decline and Fall." The bulk of the cantata shows the composer in quite another position and very differently engaged. We see him urging on his wild career by means of all the musical licentiousness which modern tolerance in art allows. He is under the spell of the past masters of incoherence and confusion, and writes as though the height of sublimity is reached by an oracle in convulsions. I do not wonder at this a bit. The marvel is that young musicians generally resist the temptation of a method both free and easy, especially as they can defend their apostasy by reference to a lot of opinions so muddy as that their shallowness is hard to detect. Dr Smith has not yielded half-way. He is thorough-going or nothing, and hence the confusion of his polyphonic orchestration, the wild and reckless manner in which he rages among the tonalities, the crudities of his harmony, and the general striving after an effect, which, by never coming, fixes attention on the convulsive movements of the agoniser. These features taken together exemplify complete devotion to a false ideal. If Dr Smith could resist the Ugly as firmly as his *St Kevin* did the Beautiful, it would be well for him; but, to make matters worse, he has yielded to ugliness in some of its worst forms—forms of bombast and lofty assumption which, more than anything else, excite a spirit of ridicule or anger. Yet, through all, it is evident that the composer has powers only needing direction in the proper channel. At any rate such is the impression a careful hearing of the work left upon myself. He is not deficient in imagination or in sympathy, while often he approaches as near to a good effect as the uncouthness of his method allows. This makes it worth while to offer Dr Smith counsel—to bid him leave off worshipping a musical Baal, and frequent the temple of the classical masters, where happily he may learn the secret of beauty, and school himself to the refined and chastened utterance of genuine art.

A stormy morning ushered in the second day of the festival, but could not prevent a large gathering of amateurs desirous of assisting at the first performance in Hereford of Gounod's *Redemption*. The attendance, indeed, was greater than at *Elijah*, the figures being 1,446 as against 1,137. It goes without saying that the charity benefited proportionately; and now the collections for the two days are considerably in excess of what they were three years ago. The performance of Gounod's work calls for but few remarks; the subject being now too well known for comment, while the principal artists engaged upon its exposition to day were those who had often before discharged the same task. Generally speaking, the trilogy received an adequate measure of justice. Dr Colborne showed good judgment in conducting it; the chorus and orchestra were admirable, and admirable also were the efforts of Miss Anna Williams, Miss Hilda Coward, Mme Patey, Mr Lloyd, Mr Brereton, and Mr Santley. It follows as of course that a deep impression was made upon the attentive audience, who heard the music in a place to which it most properly belongs—the "long-drawn aisle and fretted vault" of a glorious church. For this advantage alone the *Redemption* should always be a draw at cathedral festivals. It exemplifies the fitness of things in the best possible manner.

The evening festival service, like the first secular concert, was so largely attended as again to show how wisely and prudently the committee acted in endeavouring to popularize the occasion by offering seats at cheap prices. It has now been discovered that there is a new public to draw upon; that taste and discernment are found among the masses of the community who hear good music with eagerness, and henceforth there need be no empty transepts in our festival cathedrals. Throw them open to the shilling amateurs, and they will be filled; so will the treasury of the managers, and so with contentment and pleasure will be hundreds of men and women hitherto excluded from participation in a great solemnity. To judge of the effect I went myself this evening among the far-away transept people. We could see nothing but massive columns and springing arches—here standing out in the full blaze of gaslight, there fading off into gloom and darkness; but if we could not see we could hear better, it may be, than those whose listening attention was distracted by a view of the performers. We were assured by a silent and reverent crowd, impressed more than common perhaps as the sublime or tender strains of Spohr's *Last Judgment* came to us from their invisible source with all harshness softened down by distance. I do not ask for better companions in hearing solemn music. From first to last the proverbial pin might have been heard to drop in our midst, and many a tear was furtively wiped away when "Blest are the departed" was exquisitely sung by Mme Albani, Mme Patey, Mr Lloyd, Mr Santley, and the chorus came with its rich harmonies and affecting accents. It is this impressive character which gives to cathedral festivals their special value, and makes all who can feel it desire their long continuance and increase.

The performance of Spohr's beautiful oratorio was most creditable to every one concerned. Its progress was singularly free from *contretemps*, and those engaged upon it seemed moved by the spirit of the place to enter into the full meaning of the theme. Certainly the admirable band and chorus have done nothing better during the week, nor can any praise be too great for the touching and skilful delivery of the solos by the artists above-named, who, one and all, were worthy of their exalted reputation. From Spohr's ornate strains to the noble severity of Bach's *A Stronghold* sure was a change which, it may be, some present failed to appreciate. The cantata was given with the additional accompaniments written for a performance in the St James's Hall by Mr Otto Goldschmidt. Upon these, as upon the work itself, I have before commented, and now need only express complete satisfaction with the committee's revival of a fine example of Bach's style. The solos were taken in this case by Miss Anna Williams and Mr Harper Kearton. Dr Colborne conducted throughout, and may be congratulated on the success of his efforts.—J. B.

(From a Correspondent.)

Wednesday, Sept. 9.

That this year has been *par excellence* a year of musical festivals and anniversaries no one who has followed the events of 1885 will have reason to doubt. This week we have to chronicle the annual gathering of the three choirs of Hereford, Gloucester, and Worcester, which event takes place by rotation at the first-named city. No less than 161 gatherings of this kind have been held, but, far from any falling off in interest or patronage, the present bids fair to equal any of its predecessors. Although with two or three minor exceptions there has been an entire absence of novelty, yet the programmes provided were of a comprehensive and attractive nature, the committee having taken great pains and saved no expense in engaging first class artists, a fully competent band of 64 performers, and well trained chorus, in order to maintain the high standard of efficiency expected from this the most ancient provincial musical institution in England.

Nearly the whole of Monday was taken up with the rehearsals, and, naturally, owing to enforced familiarity with well-trodden ground, the band were well up to their work, and very few hitches were noticeable; the small attendance of the general public were therefore gratified by a fair insight of the week's arrangements.

The wisdom of selecting such a popular and well-known work as *Elijah* for the opening oratorio on Tuesday in the Cathedral was amply proved by a large attendance, although the wet and gloomy weather was probably responsible for many vacant seats, there being nearly 300 persons less present than at the corresponding last festival performance. Detailed notice of such a work as this, or *The Messiah*, the concluding oratorio on Friday morning, is, of course, quite unnecessary. Both these works probably owe their popularity not only to their masterly writing, but to the fact that they appeal as much to the non-technical as to the technical musician, the former being led away by the massive choruses, and interested more by their melodious simplicity than by their musicianly construction. Such a *tour de force* as *Mdme Albani*, Miss Anna Williams, *Mdmes Patey* and *Enriquez*, with Messrs *Lloyd*, *Harper*, *Kearton*, and *Santley*, could not be otherwise than eminently satisfactory, while the band and chorus discharged their important duties with every care and attention to the "beat" of Dr Langdon Colborne, the Cathedral organist.

The evening concert at the Shire Hall was, for the most part, taken up by the new cantata, *St Kevin*, composed expressly for the festival, and conducted by Dr J. Smith, of Dublin. The cantata is supposed to depict, though in a somewhat novel and tedious manner, the temptation of St Kevin, a pious young monk, by a beautiful maiden, Kathleen; his flight and seclusion to a rocky cliff, where he is followed and discovered asleep by the maiden. St Kevin, awaking, discovers her trembling near him; at once recovers himself; and, with a prayer to strengthen him in his hour of temptation, he commands her, in an agitated and threatening tone, to leave him. His unholy dream is brought to his mind by a chorus; St Kevin hears the mocking and taunts of demons, and, goaded into frenzy by their fierce promptings, seizes the maiden and hurls her into the lake beneath him. Dr Smith has here a fair and romantic subject to deal with, but, with the exception of the opening chorus, "In Luggelaw's deep wooded vale," written in a tranquil and pastoral style, intended to describe the *locale*, the chorus at the end of the first part, "Swift as the sudden wind that sings," and Kathleen's solo, "What hasty foot," (which was given with much delicate beauty and quaint expression by Miss Anna Williams, although words and music were hardly suited to one another), the cantata is

for the most part of an uninteresting character, strongly imbued with the peculiarities which belong to Irish National Melodies, and in several places where the composer has something important to say, owing to a lack of the art of exposition, the main ideas become confused and lost in the novel harmonies and ambiguous instrumentation which tend to divert the attention. No doubt, with careful pruning of the score, many beauties now hidden would become prominent to the attentive listener. As is usual on these occasions, the work was received with signs of approval from a large audience. The solo artists, Miss Anna Williams, Messrs Harper Kearton and Brereton, ably fulfilled their most arduous and unsatisfactory tasks.

Beethoven's overture to *Fidelio*, No. 4, with a portion of Mozart's symphony in D major and some miscellaneous items, completed the programme. The many vacant places before noticed were fully occupied by an anxious audience, who flocked to the cathedral on Wednesday morning to hear *The Redemption*.

Notwithstanding a few hitches, a splendid performance was given of this noble tone sermon. The fitness of the sacred surroundings linked with the impressive strains and a fascinating infatuation in the plot has such a hold upon the listener that its effects linger in the mind some time after quitting the building to resume connection with the outer world. Band, chorus, and soloists, Miss Hilda Coward, *Mdme Patey*, Messrs *Lloyd*, *Brereton*, and *Santley* acquitted themselves admirably. Miss Anna Williams expounded faithfully and with wonderful pathos the soprano music in the second part hitherto associated with *Mdme Albani*, and contributed not a little to the general success.

Spohr's *Last Judgment* and Bach's *A Stronghold* Sure are announced for this evening in the cathedral, with *Mdmes Albani*, *Anna Williams*, *Patey*, *Enriquez*, and Messrs *Lloyd*, *Santley*, *Harper Kearton*, and *Brereton* as soloists. The remaining days of the festival will be taken up with Dvorak's *Stabat Mater*, *The Hymn of Praise*, and *The Messiah*, while two interesting evening concerts will be held at the Shire Hall, at one of which will be produced C. H. Lloyd's *Song of Balder* for soprano solo, orchestra, and chorus, the second absolute novelty.—W. A. J.

"RECITALS" AT THE INVENTIONS EXHIBITION.

The following is the programme of the pianoforte recital given by Mr Gustav Ernest, assisted by Signor Meo, solo violinist, in the Music Room on Wednesday, Sept. 9:—(a) Fantaisie in F sharp minor (Gustav Ernest), (b) Berceuse (c) Ballade (Chopin); Violin solo, "Faust" (Alard)—Signor Meo; Hungarian Rhapsodie, No. 14 (Liszt); Violin solo, "Feu Follet" (Papini)—Signor Meo; (a) Gavotte (Silas), (b) Romanze (Gustav Ernest), (c) Valse Caprice (Rubinstein). The instrument used for the "illustrations" was a very fine "grand" by Messrs J. & J. Hopkinson, the beauties of which were abundantly displayed by the talented execution of Mr Ernest.

A novel experiment was tried by Mr Georg Asch in the Music Room of the exhibition on Tuesday evening, August 25. He "recited" on a "ten guinea pianoforte" various compositions of his own, including a "Grand Patriotic March of the Nations," as well as a charming reverie, "Feuilles Mortes," both of which were very successful and warmly applauded at the conclusion, the instrument upon which he played answering his call upon its power remarkably well. A descriptive piece, "La Caravane," was capably played, and a fantasia on airs from Verdi's *Il Trovatore* had to be repeated. A selection from Flotow's *Martha*, and a "Sacred Fantasia," by Richardson, were also given with effect. The experiment proved eminently successful. The room was quite full, and the audience were evidently delighted with what they had heard.

Mr Tobias A. Matthay, R.A.M., has joined the army of "reciters" at the International Inventions Exhibition. He will play next Wednesday afternoon on one of Brinsmead & Son's new grand pianofortes, pieces by Chopin, Henselt, and Schumann; "Three thought pieces" and a Fantasia-Etude of his own composition, as well as Beethoven's "Moonlight" Sonata. Mr Matthay will have the assistance of Miss Kate McNeill who will sing an Aria by Verdi accompanied on the pianoforte by Miss Annie McNeill.

Herr Schubert the indefatigable director of the Schubert and other kindred Societies, has been making a concert tour in the provinces visiting Colchester, Southsea, Tunbridge Wells, Dover, Ramsgate, Hastings, and Folkestone. Herr Schubert returned "from his triumphs" on Thursday, and left for Paris on Friday.



INTERNATIONAL INVENTIONS EXHIBITION.

(Continued from page 561.)

CHORAL COMPETITIONS.

On resuming the competitions on Wednesday afternoon in the Royal Albert Hall, five provincial and three metropolitan choirs were found ready to enter the arena to contend with each other for prizes awarded for the best interpretation of three works, two of which being fixed upon by the council, while the other was left to the taste and discretion of the directors of each society. Evidently the advantages which the executive council of the International Exhibition secured by special arrangements with railway companies have not been disregarded by amateurs dwelling in the country, and the time of year appointed being that of the holiday season, they were thus enabled, at small expense, to visit London in the company of fellow townsfolk bent upon musical pleasures. Unfortunately, the arrangements do not meet the convenience of London amateurs, who eagerly avail themselves of every opportunity that might offer in early autumn for quitting town for the country. This might account in part for the comparatively feeble response made by the central and suburban societies to the call of the council. Be that as it may, choristers from the provinces have met with a cordial greeting, fairly merited, however, by devotion to the art; and concern nigh to pity was felt at witnessing the embarrassments brought about by untoward events accompanying the proceedings on Wednesday. The weather was most unpropitious. Heavy rain, with stifling heat, not only rendered the grounds unfit for outdoor enjoyment, but extended their depressing influence also to the interior of the hall. The vast space which it encloses was heavy with vapours as deteriorating to the vocal organs as prejudicial to the temper and spirits. Nor did the gloom stop short at the performers, but settling upon the auditors it put them out of humour, and made them impatient of delays. For by a miscalculation of the time each choir would take in performing its allotted task, besides that occupied in making its entrance and exit, a long pause in the proceedings was caused. Against the annoyance to which this recurring delay gave rise the singers had to contend, and valiantly did they strive to overcome besetting difficulties. The contest both on Wednesday and Thursday was limited to mixed choirs, numbering not less than fifty voices, nor more than 100, the selected test pieces being Mendelssohn's anthem, "Judge me, O God!" and Converso's "When all alone." The Portsmouth Temperance Choral Society (conductor, Mr Green) led the way with a good interpretation of the psalm and the madrigal, and gained special esteem for a carefully-prepared reading of Webbe's glee, "When winds breathe soft." Without trusting entirely to the advantages which strength alone affords, the Sheffield Tonic Sol-fa Association (conductor, Mr Coward) showed determination to use the art that converts the rough metal into the polished weapon. Truly, it was a matter for surprise that a body, wherein the bass voices preponderate to so great a degree, should give utterances so soft as those heard in Leslie's "Lullaby of Life." The applause which followed the Sheffield folk out of the orchestra must have incited the Hanley Glee and Madrigal Society (conductor, Mr Garner) to unwonted exertion, for the qualities they displayed were of a really high order. Firm in tone and sound in practice, they rendered the psalms, madrigal, as well as Gounod's "Come unto Him," with almost unflinching skill. Without, perhaps, any remarkable characteristics to make manifest, the Chesterfield Harmonic Society (conductor, Mr Seed) acquitted themselves with honour, especially in Macfarren's "Break, Break." Considerable interest was taken in the choir of the Popular Ballad Concerts Committee (conductor, Mr W. Henry Thomas), as the singers represented on that occasion a body of ladies and gentlemen who are doing good work at the East end of London. Few in number, the members of the choir not only appealed to the judges and the public on their own behalf, but also endeavoured to illustrate, and that with some success, the course that musical art, under the auspices of the committee, is now taking in the industrial districts. The Peckham Tonic Sol-fa Choir (conductor, Mr Raymond) did well in Sullivan's "Say, Watchman, what of the night?"

the piece selected by them; and the South London Temperance Choir (conductor, Mr Bond) showed judgment in choosing Calcott's glee, "O snatch me swift," to supply an extra proof of their capacity. But the same cannot be said of the Marlborough Choral Society (conductor, Mr Macrow) for fixing upon the famous "March of the Men of Harlech" wherein to show their ability in works of a contrapuntal order.

Bright sunshine imparted cheerfulness to the proceedings of yesterday, when the contest was continued before a large company of auditors upon the lines of the preceding day. Five other choirs of mixed voices were engaged upon the test pieces, Mendelssohn's "Judge me, O God!" and Converso's "When all alone." The members of the Oxford Choral Society (conductor, Mr C. H. Lloyd) recommended themselves by singing of great refinement. Had the male voices equalled in richness and power those of the upper registers, the balance would have been complete. In the madrigal, as well as in Smart's "Dream, baby, dream," vocal charm was accentuated by neat and precise enunciation of words. Justifying the claim set forward by Welshmen to distinction in the practice of music, the Vale of Clwyd Choir (conductor, Mr Watkins) opened the psalm in noble style, and sustained its varied phrases with praise-worthy art. The madrigal was taken, perhaps, a trifle too fast, but attention to light and shade never relaxed. Indeed, in the excerpt from Benedict's *St Peter*, "The Lord is a Lamp," the use of *crescendo* and *diminuendo* was, if anything, somewhat excessive. At this stage of the proceedings Mr Thomas Pettit gave a recital on the organ, a deviation from the scheme made necessary by the non-attendance of the Grimsby Choir. At the appointed hour the Temperance Strand Choral Society (conductor, Mr Birch) appeared and acquitted themselves admirably; the attack, if not prompt, was sure, and a general steadiness maintained the good reputation this choir has already won elsewhere. Following the West London Choral Association (conductor, Mr Holmes), the Perseverance Choral Temperance Choir (conductor, Mr Field) brought the day's proceedings to a close.

In arranging the programme so spiritedly carried out on Friday afternoon, the council, happily, had not to cope with the monotony from which there seemed, in the earlier sections of the scheme, no escape. During the three preceding days, it should be remembered, the four selected test pieces had to bear the strain that continued service imposed. The compositions, however, were chosen with consummate judgment; though few in number they afforded variety and contrast, and at the same time illustrated periods in musical history placed some centuries apart. Mendelssohn's psalms, "Why rage fiercely the heathen," and "Judge me, O God," are undoubtedly amongst the finest choral productions of the last generation; while the madrigals, "Fire, fire my heart" (Morley), and "When all alone" (Converso), are as surely noble specimens of vocal music of the Elizabethan epoch. Probably members of the executive committee counted upon the divergent style of the two orders for relief so much desired; if so, their anticipations were doomed to fail, as the choirs for the most part gave the same colour to compositions widely differing in mode and purpose. Without doubt the striking features of the anthems were more vividly seen and better understood than the subdued characteristics of the madrigals. Still to the latter class should our vocal societies go for pure examples of unaccompanied music. Throughout the week the Elizabethan strains have been rather roughly used; very often the speed was too fast; sometimes the accents were jerky; and generally the performances have been destitute of that pastoral kind of beauty which individualizes them, and removes them far away from the forceful music of recent origin. Doubtless the conductors of the societies are to a great extent responsible for the small amount of discrimination observed in the treatment of the two kinds of music. Happily the greatest educational gains of this week of competition will fall to the estimable gentlemen who direct year after year, with little or no remuneration and under many vexations and serious disadvantages, the weekly practice of musical organizations in town and country. Naturally, men of such keen observation in all matters relating to their art will profit by witnessing fellow-

workers engaged in their pursuits; and some might thereby be induced to modify a too redundant action on the platform, which often distracts the attention of the public. To the patience and ability of men such as the conductors at the present competition we look for aid in the further advancement of the people in the art of music. Should they be disheartened by the poor pay doled out, let them gather courage from the fact lately shown that a conductor is now able to obtain a sum of money for his work as large as a very popular operatic "star" can reach.

The Redhill Drawing-room Class (conductor, Mr Parry), which pleasantly opened the proceedings on Friday afternoon, being the only choir that responded to the invitation to compete, the award was in consequence withheld. In spite of these untoward circumstances the ladies appeared, and sang in "Hope and Memory" (Smart), "The Shepherd Boy" (Hering), and "When evening's twilight" (Hatton), gaining thereby the goodwill of the large audience. Three societies entered the list opened to choirs of men's voices, for which the selected test pieces were "The long day closes" (Sullivan), and "Our ship now goes" (Hatton). A certain heaviness marked the singing of Sullivan's part-song by the Southsea choir (conductor, Mr Higgins), probably brought about by the imperfect intonation of those engaged on the inner parts. Hatton's merry ditty was, however, given with heartiness and effect. Though the Preston Orpheonic Society (conductor, Mr Worden) imparted fullness to the harmonies of "The long day closes," they did not for all that escape defects of intonation—impediments to enjoyment that did not intrude themselves in Hatton's song. The unison passage in De Rille's *Martyr of the Arena*, the piece selected by the members, was declaimed with considerable energy—a quality the singers with justice prided themselves upon. By the utterance of the first few notes of Sullivan's part-song the Leeds Scarboro' Harmonic Society (conductor, Mr Ward) proclaimed themselves singers of rare excellence. Good quality of tone was not impaired by feebleness or uncertainty, and by buoyancy of phrasing the work was lifted to its naturally high level. The test pieces for the choirs of men's voices placed in the fifth class were "Come, let us join the roundelay" (Beale), and "Come, bounteous May" (Spofforth). Dr Stainer's entrance on the orchestra, to conduct the London Male Voice Club, provoked hearty cheers. The presence of the accomplished musician naturally ensured merit of a superior order, and the singers certainly did their best on this occasion to honour their leader by a worthy performance. Always obeying the beat of the conductor, they followed every indication of his will. There was just sufficient light and shade, and no more; an equable degree of tone prevailed; yet when any special effect was wanting to work out some distinct purpose it was never denied. The choir was large in number, but the voices were lacking in resonance. Hearty applause greeted the members of the Rhondda choir (conductor, Mr Stephens) as they wended their way to positions assigned on the orchestra. Not taking into consideration the peculiar acoustic properties of the hall, they started Beale's madrigal a trifle too fast, imperilling at once steadiness of delivery and the quality of their fine voices. But the brightness of the altos carried the performance to a triumphant conclusion. Unity of the several parts distinguished the rendering of Calcott's glee, "Queen of the Valley"—the piece of their choice. It was remarked that the staccato notes told with capital effect. Presenting many points of equal merit, the other Welsh musical organization, the Arvonian Choir (conductor, Mr Phillips) secured a like success. True, they had not the aid of altos so sympathetic as those of the preceding choir; yet, on the other hand, the basses were more ponderous, and supplied a broader harmonic foundation. Wisely choosing De Rille's *Martyr of the Arena* for a show piece, they never lost a chance that offered for the employment of their exceptional resources.

THE AWARDS.

At the conclusion of the so-to-speak choral tournament, the courteous secretary, Mr Hedley, read out the list of awards made by the judges, three of whom—Mr Henry Leslie (chairman), Mr W. A. Barrett, and Mr M'Naught—served at the Wednesday and Thursday

competitions; while Mr E. Prout (chairman), Mr Eaton Fanning, and Mr Arthur O'Leary attended in their official capacity on Tuesday and Friday. The awards are as follows: Tuesday, Sept. 1.—Class I. Choirs of mixed voices (not less than 100 members)—1st prize (£100) to the Nottingham Philharmonic Society; 2nd prize (£60), the Burslem Tonic Sol-fa Choir; 3rd prize (£30), the Birmingham Musical Association; Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 2 and 3.—Class II. Choirs of mixed voices (not less than 50 or more than 100)—1st prize (£60), to the Hanley Glee and Madrigal Society; 2nd prize (£35), to the Sheffield Tonic Sol-fa Association; 3rd prize (£15), to the Portsmouth Temperance Choral Society. The second prize would have been awarded to the Vale of Clwyd Choir had not the members chosen a piece, "The Lord is a Lamp," to which Sir Julius Benedict wrote accompaniments, and was therefore outside the restrictions imposed by the council. In token of full appreciation and sympathy the choir received a grant of £20. Friday, Sept. 4.—Class V. Choirs of men's voices (not less than 60)—1st prize (£60), was awarded to the Arvonian Choir; 2nd prize (£40), to the London Male Voice Club. Class VI. Choirs of men's voices (not less than 30, or more than 60)—1st prize (£30), to the Leeds-Scarborough Harmonic Society; 2nd prize (£20), to the Preston Orpheonic Society.—L. T.

PROMENADE CONCERTS.

On Wednesday evening the first part of the programme was, as usual, devoted to works by "Classical Masters," Cherubini's overture to *Anacreon*, Mendelssohn's "Italian Symphony," Sterndale Bennett's Concerto in F minor (pianist, Miss Josephine Lawrence), and a Sonata by Marcello (violinist, Mr E. Howell), were the instrumental pieces, the vocal compositions being the air, "Where art thou, Father dear?" from *The Spectre's Bride*, by Dvorák, and "Gli angeli d'inferno" (*Il Flauto Magico*), both effectively rendered, the first by Miss Annie Marriott, and the last named by Miss Amy Sherwin (encored). The recitative and air, "Sound an alarm," from Handel's *Judas Maccabæus*, was also included, and was magnificently declaimed by Mr Joseph Maas, who was compelled to repeat it, so enthusiastic was the applause at the conclusion.

The second part of the programme contained, among other popular compositions, Balfe's overture to *The Bohemian Girl*, a selection from *L'Etoile du Nord*, a Mazurka by B. Godard for pianoforte (Miss Lawrence), and a solo on the cornet by Mr Howard Reynolds (encored). The vocal selections consisted of Mr Crowe's "Fairie Voices" (encored as usual); "Love's Greeting," by G. Lane, capably sung by Miss Marriott, (recalled); "It came with the merry May," one of Signor Tosti's most effective compositions, rendered by Mr Maas so much to the satisfaction of the audience that he was compelled to return to the platform and sing "Once Again;" and a new and very effective setting by Eugene Artôt of Lover's beautiful little poem, "The Angel's Whisper," which Miss Amy Sherwin sang with genuine pathos. Had it not come too late in the programme, the accomplished vocalist would have had to repeat it, so unanimous was the applause at its conclusion.

An English company have been delighting the Celestials at Hong-Kong with Lecocq's *Fille de Mme Angot*.

M. Leloir has nearly completed his statue of Hector Berlioz. The composer is represented leaning on his desk with his cheek supported on one hand while the other hand is thrust in his trousers' pocket—a favourite attitude of his.

THE PRINTERS' CORPORATION.—The Council of the Printer's Corporation held a meeting on Saturday last in the Board Room of the Printers' Almshouses at Wood-green, and, after the routine business had been transacted, an entertainment for the aged inmates of the institution was given. Full justice having been done to a substantial tea, the evening was spent in social enjoyment. Mr F. J. E. Young, Chairman of the Council, presided, and the band connected with the firm of Henderson, Rait, & Spalding, under the direction of Trumpet-Major Cubis, performed a selection of music in an admirable manner. Mr W. H. Collingridge, the local visitor, announced that an anonymous friend had offered to contribute £100 as the nucleus of a fund with which still further to extend the usefulness of the charity.

BIRTH.

On Wednesday, September 2, at Chadwell Heath, the wife of W. SWEET, Esq. (née ALICE JEWSON), of a son.

DEATHS.

On September 3, JAMES A. SMYTH, of Walton House, Forest Hill, late Bandmaster Royal Artillery, Woolwich, in his 67th year.

On September 3, at 3, Hungerford Road, N., JAMES ROBERTSON MURRAY, aged 49, late organist of St Botolph, Aldersgate, and of St Paul's, Camden Square; also late choirmaster of the London Church Choir Association.

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LONDON, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1885.

THURINGIA, THE LAND OF MUSIC.

Otto Gumprecht, the celebrated clever and sympathetic Berlin musical critic of the *National Zeitung*, gives in that periodical a highly attractive description of Ilmenau in Thuringia, where for many years past he has spent the summer months. In this article, characterizing to a nicety the country and the people, he observes, among other things, with reference to the well-known love of music felt by the Thuringians: "A musical element forms the essence of the Thuringian dialect and of the being of those who speak it. The number of melodious voices is exceedingly large, especially among the female population. Nowhere else are there so many and such energetic *Liedertafeln*. Even in the smallest village a crowd of sturdy brothers-in-song is accustomed to gather round the cantor or the schoolmaster. Melodies resound on all sides: before the houses, in the fields and meadows, during the hours of work, and over a glass. The ear is agreeably surprised by the certainty of intonation as well as by the thoroughly correct thirds, fifths, and sixths issuing from entirely untutored throats when singing together. The little country between the Saale and the Werra sends its musical performers all over the world. *Führten eines wandernden Musikanten*, the once much read romance of the Meiningen author, Ludwig Bechstein, is of genuine Thuringian growth. A.D. 1620, Michael Altenburg writes that 'everywhere' (in Thuringia, that is to say) 'Musica is in full swing.' Wilhelm Heinse, a native of Langewiesen near Ilmenau, and author of *Ardingello* as well as of *Hildegard von Hohenthal*, speaking of his fellow-countrymen some 150 years later, said: 'Most of them understand music.' It is true that, despite the rich natural musical gifts of the people of Thuringia, no composers of much note have, for some considerable period at least, sprung from among them. In this respect, Thuringia cannot be compared with Saxony, who reckons among her sons Marschner, Schumann, Robert Volkmann, and Richard Wagner. But Sebastian Bach's cradle stood in Eisenach. His race, with whom, from the earliest times, the cultivation of music was hereditary, supplied the country for so many generations with organists and performers on other instruments, that at Erfurt the musicians of the Municipal Band were called simply the Bachs.

"No one will deny that a certain amiability is an element in the Thuringian character. Unsuspecting, modest, confiding, and communicative, almost free from harshness and asperity, it unites in itself all those qualities which are summed up in a term, '*Gemüthlichkeit*,'^{*} not to be exactly rendered in any other language. Neither Young nor Old ever fail to salute us. We have scarcely ever to complain of coarseness, rudeness, or intrusiveness. Any person coming from the restless movement and deafening turmoil of the Imperial capital to one of the fresh summer retreats in Thuringia might fancy himself carried back two or three generations. Time, that valuable factor in our life now-a-days, possesses here either no value at all or only very slight value. The people—I am speaking of the home population

—are as lavish of it as they are thrifty with their money. The frequency with which St Monday recurs is a peculiarity of the Thuringian calendar. Were there truth in an old proverb thus formulated, 'Let everyone be happy for whom the clock never strikes,' these people would enjoy an enviable lot. Thuringian good-nature, however, has an unpleasant wrong-side, most strongly pronounced in those parts of the much-apportioned land where the Prussian State has not had the people in its strict school. Because they find it extraordinarily difficult to say, No, not too much reliance is to be placed on their word. Want of punctuality, forgetfulness, and untrustworthiness of the most varied description, are deeply-rooted evils with them. Sometimes the prices asked for things surprise us by their primitive moderation, but sometimes, also, by the contrary. It may very well happen that at the same place the reckoning for a meal amounts to double that paid for a similar meal the day before. The inhabitants would fain render the stay of their summer visitors in every way as agreeable as possible, but, partly from want of insight into the visitors' wishes and requirements, and partly from indolence and supineness, the result does not always in any way correspond with the good intention. The visitor from a great city who seeks to recuperate his health desires principally repose, undisturbed repose. This, in his opinion, comprehends every kind of happiness, just as shade and fresh water do for the Arab. But there is never an Ilmenau season in which troops of marksmen, singers, athletes, and other merry and boisterous individuals, do not, as soon as it is light, march in procession, amid the banging of drums and the blowing of trumpets, through the small town, while all the dogs far and near join in with a chorus of barking, howling, and whining. Thus, for instance, quite recently the Guild of Marksmen scared us up out of our sleep at six in the morning three times in one week. They might have had patience to wait an hour before giving vent to their enthusiasm; there would still have been plenty of broad daylight for them.

Ilmenau contains at present some 4,000 souls. It consists of a long, straggling, principal street, running downwards from north-east to south-west, and various side-streets, now stretching out in the valley, and now climbing up the mountain-side. Many houses have little gardens, in which flourish the smaller kinds of fruit and vegetables, as well as all sorts of flowers, especially roses. The latter are cultivated with particular love and care, being the joy and the pride of their owners. On account of the shortness of the summers and the pooriness of the soil, agriculture yields only slight remuneration. The land gained from the forest is mostly converted into meadows, which, especially in their party-coloured spring garb, when high in the air the lark trills forth its joyous notes, appeal to us most strongly by their simple charm. Every morning the horn of the herdsman summons the herds to the pastures. As the animals answer with their joyous lowing, gather round him, and take their departure amid the harmonious sounds of their bells, the visitor from a large city always takes fresh delight in the scene with which, as a rule, he is acquainted only from Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* or Haydn's *Jahreszeiten*. It is true that modern farming is curtailing his pleasure more and more by its much vaunted system of stall-feeding. Thirty years since, the Ilmenau herds were probably three or four times as numerous as now. Their bells, so beautifully attuned to the voices of nature, will soon be altogether silent.

"In Ilmenau we follow step by step the sojourn of Goethe there. At the Lion Inn is the room he regularly occupied as often as he visited the beloved little town, which he did nearly every year. It was on the Schwalbenstein, a peak of the Höhenzug on the left bank of the Ilm, about half-an-hour's walk from the town, and whence the traveller looks down upon the lovely Manebacher Valley, that Goethe wrote out the fourth act of *Iphigenia*, in its first shape. There is a memorial tablet dedicated to the fact. 'Serenio die, quieta mente' (so we read in Goethe's Diary), 'I there wrote, after a lapse of three years, the fourth act of my *Iphigenia* in one day—the 19th March, 1779.' Two hundred paces from the Kichelhahnthurm stands a faithful facsimile of Goethe's little old house, set on fire through the carelessness of a tailor's coffee-making family. The following lines, in the poet's own hand, were to be read on one of the wooden walls:

" Ueber allen Gipfeln ist Ruh!
In allen Wipfeln hörtst Du
Keinen Hauch!

* From the Leipzig *Signale*.

† The word may be approximately rendered in English: "Good-nature; "Kindliness."

Die Vögelin schlafen im Walde,
Warte nur, balde, balde,
Schläfst auch Du ![†]

"Thus ran the first sketch of the exquisite 'Nachtlied,' afterwards worked out by the author. In a rock situated not far off, the large Hermann's Stone, Goethe, mindful of his Charlotte von Stein, cut the letter S. He afterwards sent his fair friend two poems informing her of the fact. Pious reverence has lately adorned with one of them the spot to which the poem owed its production :

"Was ich läugnend gestehe und offenbahrend verberge,
Ist mir ein reichlicher Trost, bleibt mir ein lieblicher Schatz.
Ich vertrau' es dem Felsen, damit der Einsame rathe,
Was in der Einsamkeit, was in der Welt mich beglückt." §

Goethe visited Ilmenau for the first time as far back as 1776. Commissioned by the Duke, he wanted to see what amount of damage had been caused by an extensive conflagration. He had already begun to turn his attention to mining, many traces of which remind us even at the present hour of its once flourishing condition, and reach back into the fifteenth century.

"Though Ilmenau did not fulfil the poet's darling hope, it remained dear to him up to the day of his death. In his early days, with his Carl August, he indulged in romantic dreams, shot, caroused, and twirled round in the dance the daughters of the land. The lime-trees in the street named after them were planted at his suggestion, and the cattle-bells, tuned to the C major triad, are said to have been introduced by him. At Shrovetide, 1784, he made, before the Town Hall, the speech in which he lost the thread of his discourse but not his self-possession, for, after a pause of several minutes, he continued very quietly and cheerfully. When he had really made an end, the crowd, who had assembled in hundreds, remained expectantly together, in the belief he was only once more collecting his thoughts. On the 27th August, 1831, on the eve of his eighty-second birthday, he once more visited on the Kinkelbahn the hunter's hut to which, on the 2nd September, 1783, he had entrusted his 'Nachtlied.' In the Diary we read:—"Inspected the old inscription, then, wrapt in admiration, drove along the high road. While the eye ran over the lead pencil characters on the wall, the lips whispered: "Balde, balde, schläfst auch du." ||

"Ilmenau is, as we are aware, the title written over the remarkable poem whence the annexed lines are borrowed. In a wonderfully truthful manner they mirror the *genius loci* with the delicate feeling, lucidity, and intuitive perception always distinguishing Goethe. Every word contributes a significant line, a characteristic tone of colour to the picture unfolded in them. The all-swaying, all-penetrating influence of the Thuringian landscape with its homely charm was never more simply, more truly, or more eloquently portrayed:—

"Amuthig Thal ! du immer grüner Hain !
Mein Herz begrüsst euch immer auf das Beste ;
Entfaltet mir die schwer behangnen Aeste,
Nehmt freundlich mich in eure Schatten ein,
Erquickt von euren Höhn, am Tag der Lieb und Lust,
Mit frischer Luft und Balsam meine Brust !
Wie kehrt' ich oft mit wechselndem Geschicke,
Erhabner Berg ! an deinen Fuss zurücke.
O lass mich heut' an deinen sachten Höhn
Ein jugendlich, ein neues Eden sehn ! . . .
Mir wieder selbst, von allen Menschen fern,
Wie bad' ich mich in euren Duffen gern !
Melodisch rauscht die hohe Tanne wieder,
Melodisch eilt der Wasserfall hernieder." ¶

† "Over all the mountain-peaks there is repose ! Thou hearest not a breath in all the tree-tops ! The tiny birds sleep in the wood ; only wait ; soon, soon thou, too, shalt sleep."

§ "What I denying avow, and revealing conceal, is a rich solace for me and a sweet treasure. I confide it to the rock, so that the lonely one may divine what rendered me happy in loneliness and in the world."

|| Soon, soon thou, too, shalt sleep."

¶ Thou lovely vale and thou ever verdant wood ! My heart greets ye again most warmly ; spread out for me your heavily-laden branches ; kindly receive me under your shade ; on the day of love and joy revive my breast with fresh air and balsam from your heights ! How often, lofty mountain, have I returned with changing fortune to thy foot. O, let me see to-day on thy gentle heights a youthful, a new Eden ! . . . How I love, far from all mankind, to bathe, for myself again, in your grateful perfumes ! Melodiously does the tall fir once more rustle ; melodiously does the cascade hurry downwards."

WAGNER FESTIVAL.

DER RING DES NIBELUNGEN.

(A Rhapsody from an enthusiastic and exuberant Correspondent.)

Munich, September 7.

Another year of patience and eager hope has brought the Master's disciples to another festival, when, be it amongst the pine-tined hills of Bayreuth, where the panoramic beauty of the surrounding country seems to acquiesce in everything that its composer has described in his boundless stave of inspiration, or in the more prosaic capital of Bavaria, the increasing interest and success that have always attended the performances prove that the voices who confidently prophesied that the works of Wagner would fast fade and fall as soon as his earthly frame should wither have either been compelled to own the failure of their predictions, or to see them take flight into the regions of oblivion to which they had prophetically exiled his works. Far from such an end, the music of Wagner has now attained a degree of religious necessity, musical pilgrims from all parts of the cardinal points making it a duty of delight to attend at the spiritual shrine of the departed composer year after year, and like the great oasis in the desert of to-day's musical existence, refreshing and strengthening their mental being against another dreary year's journey of arid monotony.

The effect of a work like *Der Ring des Nibelungen* on the minds of its hearers is that of a great musical miracle, by whose powerful philosophy the ills that sum up the heavy subscription of existence are completely charmed away when under its monumental government, the super-human sway of inspiration that every bar carries onward to its neighbour, absorbing the spirit to bodily extermination. It is the altar from whose high summit shines the luminous moral of music over the entire artistic congregation, on the steps of which, in the form of the *Rheingold*, *Walküre*, and *Siegfried*, Poetry and Music ascend to be joined as one by the mighty blessing of the *Götterdämmerung*. There is a certain community of musicians who appear to derive complete satisfaction from their art by following theoretically the narrow doctrines of those composers who, whether from inability to express their ideas in a more original form, or from a determined prejudice to deafen their minds to everything beyond the meridian of their limited inspiration, which their beguiled followers actually mistake for melody, have chosen so to compose to the world of music, such argument as the only legitimate substantiation of the art. Happily, for coming generations, the present adherents of the latter teaching are, to-day, if not entirely dissolved into the ambitious column of progressive thought, about to obliterate their former fallacies for the genuine and natural ideas that awaken in them by the coming of a saving spirit, and the passing of whose genius has made the art of music a *Cresus* by his unfathomable depth of inspiration. The performances of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* were preluded this evening with the inexpressibly beautiful prologue, *Das Rheingold*. It was to a theatre literally "squashed" from every available spot with an eager audience that the deep, swift-currented opening to the Rhine's depth fell, and in like manner did the entire imagination of the attentive listeners stream down, note after note, with it, the ever increasing *crescendo* of the deep-drawn E flat, which little by little dawns into a splendour of development like the noon of sun-worship, until, reaching, as it were, the heaven, with its inspirative flame tips the whole surrounding with a vermilion touch of its brush, which, as the climax of the motive is reached, becomes the allegorical embodiment of the guarded gold.

To Herr Levi, who conducts the entire drama, no criticism can be sufficiently scant, or praise sufficiently magnified to express what the enchanted hearers felt at his inspired reading and rendering of the introduction (that even non-partakers in Wagner's sublime supper of the *Nibelungen Ring* are quick to admire and eulogize) to the greater prelude, inspiring the listener with the idea that the orchestra was the source of the liquid snake, whose endless themes for romance were, of Wagner, rendered epic, and by their exquisite awakening of every blade in the emerald grass of inspiration that this particular part of the Master's score overflows with, causing a corresponding flood of overpowering feeling, such as might madden the gates of Jove. Can poetry wed her sublime stanza to a finer fellowship of musical illustration than example puts forth in the prelude to *Das Rheingold*? The only response that is floatable on so stormy

a sea of undeniable proof is that of a numberless echo of negatives, who, in endowment of mental means whereby to participate in the "Vulcan veins of musical flames," bursting forth from their Master's brain-hold, can revel and rejoice their several lives out in the sole and unique consolation which the "full stave" alone can yield when describing the poetry of the passions over which Wagner is all-father. Of the artists taking part in this year's performances all, with unimportant changes, are the same who played in the second cycle last autumn, and, therefore, exempt from rough or calm criticism; the Rhine daughters are once more impersonated by Fräulein Blank, Herzog, and Basta. The former lady played Flosshilde with considerable grace and sweetness, whilst her charming sisters, Wellgunde and Woglinde, supported their triplet relation with equal grace of mermaidian prettiness and silvern song, Woglinde's leading theme touching the most subtle of appreciative nerves, the sounds, "Wallala, weiala, weia," creating a simile akin to that of a myriad of streams forming one echoing note and intermingling with the main, which, instead of the river, was its nearest relation, the orchestra.

To that section of the audience who hear and appreciate as much of Wagner's delicious discourse as those persons who attend picture-palaces, and who go from one chamber of colour to another as if they were merely counting the number of works the walls contained, the exquisite variety of harmonious infusion and precipitate blending must inevitably be dull; but to those enviable enthusiasts who not only are more lavishly looked upon by nature's mental maternity,* but whose innate love for music is an ever attendant aureole of enchantment over their earthly life, Wagner, poet and musician, is no longer the *phantom* of his art that those beings who crave in music, as they do in their religion, for exemplifications redolent of everything that is of mere *earthly succour*, and who are too feeble to *religionize* any ideas of illusion that may pass through their spirits, would have Music, that unbridled muse of mythology, pent up in the exhausted atmosphere of their suffocated souls. The manner in which the Master illustrates the slippery and dank dawn of Alberich, in the midst of the sportful frolics of the Rhine daughters, is another example of the magician's inspired brush, the texture of the material being handled and put forth with the wizard wealth of purpose that amazes and perplexes to-day's painters when in contemplation of their old masters. The character of Nibelhiem's distorted king is in the space of these few bars of introduction recorded with such an astonishing amount of electric imagination that the Curser of the Rhine metal in question is heard, judged, and condemned ere his lusty tread ascends the first rock towards the surface of the stream of shining sound, whereon the maiden guardians are gracefully swimming. Alberich, not only the personification of earthly evil, but the *pilchering*-pivot upon whose hideous hide the entire world of gods revolve in fateful power, is by Wagner developed into the musical allegory of the all-powerful Satan, and where the flaming crags of Nibelhiem's deep dungeons discover this inhuman crest of crime under-ruling the gods above.

(To be continued.)

MDME MARIE ROZE IN IRELAND.

On Saturday last, in Dublin, on the occasion of Mdme Roze's last appearance, she met with a grand ovation, and the *Irish Times* to-day gives the following account of Mdme Roze's reception: "A noticeable incident was the Ave Maria (with violin, harmonium, and piano *obbligato*) rendered delightfully by Mdme Marie Roze, and encored. Mdme Roze also sang 'Terence's Farewell' most charmingly, at the conclusion of which, a basket of roses, in the centre of which lay a handsome gold bracelet, was presented to Mdme Marie Roze—a small tribute of admiration from a few Dublin friends. The bracelet consisted of a flat gold band, and bore the inscription 'Cuininnig,' which signifies 'Remember.' After the performance a large crowd assembled outside the theatre, and, not content with cheering Mdme Roze, attempted to take the horses out of her carriage, which attempt was with great difficulty prevented. The crowd, however, followed the carriage to Morrison's Hotel, and remained outside for some considerable time cheering the popular prima donna.

MINNIE HAUK.

A private letter from Basel Land (Switzerland) informs us that this popular artist is *en route* for Prague, where she will "create" Manon, on September 17th. The part suits her to perfection, and everybody thinks it will be another Carmen for her. The directors of the Imperial Operahouses of Berlin and Vienna have promised to be present.

Minnie Hauk will once again head the list of artists of Her Majesty's Opera Company in New York. A few days ago the contract was signed, by which the season will extend to San Francisco, &c., and Manon will be given in New York with Minnie Hauk in the principal part. She sails on October 15th from an English port, and will spend a few days in London previous to her departure.

PROVINCIAL.

MAIDSTONE.—The concert on Thursday evening, Sept. 3, was given in aid of the funds of the Soldiers' Institute, Portsmouth. The singers were Mdme Adeline Paget, Miss Pauline Featherby, Mr Abercrombie, and Mr Donnell Balfe. The instrumentalist was Herr Schuberth, who played, says *The Maidstone Journal*, some enchanting solos on the violoncello with marked effect, his rendering of an 'Ave Maria' and a 'Romance' being exceedingly good." The pianist was Herr Carl Hause, who contributed some of his own compositions which met with general approbation, and the Marquis de Leuville recited several poems with finished elocution. The entertainment concluded with a humorous vocal quartet rendered with great spirit. Mr Sydney French says this splendid concert party will most likely give another concert in Maidstone during the season.

CREWKERNE.—The people of this town and neighbourhood who attended the concerts given in aid of the Parish Church Restoration Fund have to thank Mons. F. Adolphy for providing a rare treat. His daughter, Mdme Louisa Adolphy, the accomplished pianist, kindly came over from Paris to give assistance; while Mdme F. Adolphy (soprano); Mr A. Caink (baritone); and Mr H. Carman (tenor) took part. Mr Caink has sung in Crewkerne before, and has pleased very much. The two movements of Weber's Sonata and Chopin's "Polonaise" were Mdme Adolphy's best pieces, but the whole were beautifully played, and the audience testified their delight by unstinted applause. Mdme Adolphy sang two pieces in French. Mr Caink was as great a favourite as ever, and the singing of Mr Carman, whose high notes were very clear and sweet, was much admired. An efficient accompanist for the songs was found in Mr A. Ham, of Ilminster, Fellow of the College of Organists. The evening concert was largely attended, the room being well filled. Mdme Adolphy opened with one of her best numbers, the first movement of a "Concerto" by Saint-Saëns. We understand this concerto was the piece she played so successfully when she took the first prize of the Academy of Music, Paris, in 1883, in a competition open to the world. Mr Caink then gave fine expression to the solos, "I feel the Deity within," "Arm! arm! ye brave!" (Handel), for which he was recalled. Mdme F. Adolphy sang "Ouvre tes yeux bleus" (Massenet) and "Printemps nouveau" (Vidal). An addition to the programme was made by Mr Carman, who sang "The Last Watch," by special desire. Mdme Adolphy's closing selections were: (a) "Choeur des fileuses" (Wagner-Liszt), (b) "Soirée de Vienne" (Schubert-Liszt). As Mdme Adolphy left the pianoforte she was loudly applauded. Mr Ham again played the accompaniments to the songs, with the exception of those contributed by Mdme F. Adolphy, who was accompanied by her daughter.

MATLOCK, BATH.—In addition to the usual attraction of Mr Otto Bernhardt's band, at the Pavilion and Gardens, during the past week, Miss Ada Doyle, a talented vocalist of the principal London concerts, was engaged, contributing two and three songs at each evening concert. The repertoire consisted of a number of Molloy's, Tosti's, and other songs by well-known authors, of which we may enumerate "Bid me good-bye," "Never again," "Love's old, sweet song," and "Darby and Joan." In the rendering of the late lamented Sainton Dolby's composition, "I can wait," given at the Tuesday evening concert, Miss Doyle displayed considerable ability. She received a most hearty reception, and was heartily encored. On the following evening she sang Cowen's "Regret" with a pathos which created quite a *furor*. In the lighter class of song Miss Doyle proved to be the possessor of a taste which is so rarely met with in lady vocalists, and her rendering of "Going to market" was an immense success; in fact, her appearance was always the cause of an outburst of enthusiasm, and her songs were repeatedly redemanded. The attendance of visitors during the week has been most gratifying, and the close of Miss Doyle's engagement will be a cause for regret.—*Derbyshire Times*.

JOSEPH SERVAIS.

A sad piece of intelligence, says the *Ménestrel*, has reached us this week from Brussels. That excellent violoncellist, Joseph Servais, the worthy inheritor of the name and talent of his father, whose pupil he was, died suddenly on the 28th August at Hal, in the country house he occupied with his family, and as, after returning from a joyous shooting party, he was about sitting down to table with them. The victim of a ruptured aneurism, he fell suddenly to rise no more. Born at Hal on the 23rd November, 1850, he had not completed his thirty-fifth year. A pupil of his father, who transmitted to him his own admirable talent, as well as his pure and eminently elevated style, Joseph Servais, while still exceedingly young, achieved brilliant success as a virtuoso both in Belgium and abroad. For several years past he was a professor in the Brussels Conservatory, where, a faithful guardian of the paternal traditions, he formed excellent pupils. His death is a cruel loss not only for the institution but for Belgian musical art, which will feel it deeply. The little town of Hal gave him a funeral worthy of him. In the procession were remarked the Municipal Council, the Burgomaster, and the local musical societies, the latter bearing their banners draped with crape. The corners of the pall were held by the Prince de Caraman-Chimay, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Gevaert, director of the Brussels Conservatory; Doucet, president of the Brussels Artistic and Literary Club; and Nerinckx, Burgomaster of Hal. The chief mourners were M. Franz Servais, brother of the Deceased, and his two brothers-in-law, MM. Godebski and De Coster. A young lady, Mdlle Van den Eynde, who took the first prize in Servais' class at the recent Conservatory examinations, bore his bow and decorations on a cushion covered with crape. In the Church, four other of the Deceased's pupils, MM. Bouserez, G. Liégeois, Carlo Marchal, and Preuveners, executed a religious andante for four violoncellos by M. Balthasar Florence. "When," says the *Independence*, "the melancholy sonority of the bass, which he who had passed caused to vibrate so poetically, spread out beneath the Gothic roof, tears flowed from every eye. It seemed as if the very soul of him for whom all present were sorrowing, was singing once more for the last time. Several addresses were delivered at the grave, and among them was a very touching one from M. Gevaert."

FACTS IN FRAGMENTS.

Wednesday, September 2nd, should from henceforth be marked amongst Promenade Concerts with a red letter, for on this occasion a classical selection was given of so much excellence, and given too with so much artistic spirit, correctness, and noteworthy expression, that both conductor and band merit our warmest praise. It is easy enough for an orchestra to play music they are familiar with, but when a new work like Dvorák's magnificent symphony in D is performed, as it was for the first time here on this particular Wednesday, the enthusiastic applause of the audience means something we must all feel gratified in having to record. I have not to speak of the work itself; that has already been done after its performance at the Worcester Festival, when the composer himself conducted, nor have I to enquire whether upon a first hearing such movements as the *adagio* and the *scherzo* can be entirely understood, but the fact of its early revival at these concerts should not be overlooked. It exhibited the taste of Mr Crowe, the conductor, and the enthusiasm of his band, while the demeanour of the audience ably illustrated what I have before enforced, the growing taste of the public for that which is classical. Take the first part of this concert throughout, nothing could be in better form. The overture to *Tannhäuser* was boldly played, Schumann's Concerto in A, clearly rendered by the new pianist, Signorina Gemma Luziani, ending with the new overture "dramatic," which carried off the Philharmonic Society's prize, conducted here by the composer, Gustav Ernest. The vocal music was also excellent, Miss Amy Sherwin introduced "On mighty pens," from the *Creation*, and Mr Ludwig made his first appearance at these concerts this season and sang, with that faultless expression and true devotional feeling for which he is celebrated, Gounod's "There is a Green Hill." To hear an English audience give a yell of delight is not a thing easily for-

gotten, and certainly Mr Ludwig could not find fault with the encore they demanded, although a song like "The Green Hill" is not improved by repetition; it is too much of an anti-climax. If Mr Gwyllm Crowe proposes to continue giving classical concerts like this one, all I can say is, "May he reign for ever."

The Viennese Lady Orchestra is still an attraction at the Albert Palace. They don't attempt difficult music, but what they do play is well done. Balfé's *Zigunerin* overture (our old friend *The Bohemian Girl* in a new dress) exhibited them at their best, and on the evening I formed one of the audience it was encored. The young ladies look quite captivating in their change of dress, scarlet bodies and white skirts, excepting their conductor, or conductress, M^{me} Schipek, who has a black one. They are only a string band, and, therefore, cannot be said to "blow their own trumpets;" but if I am to judge by their reception, that is not needed. It is also useless for male visitors to cast sheep's eyes at them, as I am told they all bring their own bows with them. As their instructress is, however, a very strict mistress, this can only be said in a whisper.

The lingerer in London, gentleman or lady, may do worse than make a flying visit to the Crystal Palace in the off season; they will always find something to enjoy, and repose for the mind at the same time. The contact of flowers must be beneficial, and if the fruit show is sometimes a little tantalizing, Messrs Bertram & Roberts are always willing to supply our wants. The concert on Saturday last was quite an agreeable surprise, and included Miss Clara Dowle and Mr W. L. Stuart as vocalists, Miss Josephine Lawrence as pianist, and Mr Carl Jung with violin solo, Mr August Manns conducting. Those who are fond of what are called "scenes of enchantment" should witness what Messrs Brock can do for them. Their illuminated evening *fête*, given on most Saturdays, cannot be surpassed. Ten acres of brilliant illumination with lamps and lanterns in fanciful devices, fountains sparkling with the electric light, and a hundred jewelled designs to delight and bewilder the spectator. Such scenes are difficult to describe, and should be seen by all when the evenings are warm, for they will not readily be forgotten, and a saunter through lamp-lit walks tranquilizes the over-wrought brain, more particularly when associated with open-air music, which may be taken with any amount of dilution, as we get further away from it, "like the sweet sound that breathes upon a bank of violets."

PHOSPHOR.

SEASIDE MEMORIES.

Fair seaside hours, that unto me restore
Life's early sweetness, how I love to stand
And watch the children playing on the shore,
While mem'ry comes and takes me by the hand!
I see myself a little child once more,
Joyous as any mid the rosy band,
Standing upon life's beach as on the shore,
While all the future looks so fair and grand.

How many a fragrant blossom has been crushed
Since that sweet time of gladness and of hope;
And of the heart what music has been hushed!
With many a trial maturer years must cope.
And yet to-day I lift my song of praise,
The ocean of God's love for evermore
Doth flow, and forward Faith directs her gaze
To catch the glory on the Eternal Shore!

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SARAH ANN STOWE.

MR J. SPENCER CURWEN has nearly completed a second series of his "Studies in Worship Music," which will be published in the autumn. This volume will carry on the topics started in the first, which was issued five years ago. There will be several descriptive chapters on Music at the Chapel Royal, St Paul's, Westminster Abbey, and the employment of music by the Russian Church, the Moravians, the Welsh Calvinists, the Salvation Army, &c., will be treated. An important section will deal with German Protestant Church Music. In the preparation of this Mr Curwen has paid several visits to Germany. The St Cecilia movement in the Roman Catholic Church will also be noticed, and there will be a chapter on the relation of music to Sunday Schools, and another on its place in the curriculum of Theological Schools.

TONAL NICKNAMES.

DEAR SIR,—In last week's *Musical World*, I perceive an article, signed L. T., on Gounod's new oratorio. I venture to accredit you with the authorship of that article, and cannot refrain from thus expressing my gratification at your outspokenness in reference to certain mistaken views which are now threatening to demoralize our beautiful art. There are some critics who take credit to themselves for being very discerning, because they can just twig the recurrence of a "leit-motif" (at least on paper!), which they immediately fancy that no one else has perceived; and to such critics a "succession of major seconds" is a god-send, affording them a chance of a good hunt and a plentiful discovery. But seriously, that such a succession should be considered to depict the "terror inspired by the inflexibility of justice," and that the "awakening of the dead at the sound of the trumpet" should be illustrated by a "three-fold superposition, resulting in the framework of a diminished fifth," is really drawing on credulity a little too far, and reducing the poetry of a living art to a series of cold (mis-)calculations. It was not in this vein that M. Gounod composed his *Faust*. O that, like Faust, he could be his former self again!—Very truly yours,

CHARLES E. STEPHENS.

37, Howley Place, Maida Hill West.
September 2nd, 1885.

[This letter, sent to the writer of the article on "Tonal Nicknames," was not intended for publication, but is now inserted in the columns of *The Musical World* by permission of the author.]

—o—

REVIEWS.

"Operatic Duets"—Royal Edition. Edited by J. Pittman (Boosey & Co.). This volume will be warmly welcomed by all lady drawing-room singers, being a collection of some forty duets for soprano and contralto and soprano and mezzo-soprano voices culled from the operas of Rossini, Donizetti, Bellini, Auber, Mercadante, Mozart, Meyerbeer, and others. Rossini and Donizetti are the most largely resorted to for specimens of *morceaux*; the most representative of their class and to the melodic charm of which, notwithstanding the passing desuetude into which Italian opera has fallen, the public ear, tutored or untutored, can never be indifferent. The selection of duets has been made by Mr Josiah Pittman, whose experiences in the world of operatic music, it need hardly be said, is of the widest, and whose judgment, no less than his well-known authoritative skill as an editor, eminently qualified him for the task confided to him. Under the Italian words are printed metrical English translations, and the vocalists have thus either tongue at hand as may best suit their convenience. The volume forms one of the attractive "Royal Edition" series, for which the public are indebted to the tasteful enterprise of Messrs Boosey & Co., and hence is remarkable for the exquisite beauty and clearness of its musical typography, its handiness for home purposes, and its decorative pretensions as a library book. An alphabetical index of the Italian titles of the duets selected would have been useful for easy reference had it been given as well as the index of the operas drawn upon.—H.

Mr W. Dawson, the esteemed organist of Hope Street Church, Liverpool, has forwarded us an Adagio, in D major, forming No. 2 of a set of eight "original compositions" for the organ. Mr Dawson may fairly claim originality for his composition, which is admirably adapted for performance on the "king of instruments."

Mr Tobias A. Matthay, Professor of the Pianoforte at the Royal Academy of Music, has brought out a set of pieces for the pianoforte entitled "In Spring Time—Three Thought Pieces" (*largo*, *allegretto*, and *grazioso*) which the talented composer will introduce next week at the recital he intends giving in the Music Room of the Inventions Exhibition, where, no doubt, an attentive and discriminating audience will appreciate the musical thoughts of so accomplished a musician as Mr Matthay.

Messrs Weekes & Co., of Hanover Street, have sent us two songs by Frank H. Simms, "Oh, love, come back to me" and "A Cradle Song." They are set to words by Mr E. Garth, and both compositions are worthy of praise, especially the "Cradle Song," the melody of which is charming and thoroughly expressive. From the same firm we have received a "Magnificat" and "Nunc Dimittis," composed by Geo. E. Lake, forming No. 30 of "Weekes & Co.'s Series of Morning and Evening Services." Mr Lake's clever work will no doubt find general favour. It is appropriately dedicated to the Rev. Precentor Sir F. A. Gore Ouseley, Bt., the learned and esteemed Professor of Music at Oxford University.

"THE MUSIC OF THE FUTURE."

(To the Editor of the "Musical World.")

SIR,—In replying to your correspondent, Oissy-Dumaine, I am strongly tempted to content myself by referring him and your readers to the letter containing the "almost personal amount of uncalled for abuse" with which he professes to be so shocked (these musicians of the celestial regions possess such delicate susceptibilities, you see); for on the contents of that letter I am quite willing to rest my defence; but, as stated in my last communication, having before my mental vision the terrific spectacle of Oissy-Dumaine's denunciation of my rudeness, should I fail to answer all the serious charges he brings against me, I find myself forced to favour him with a somewhat elaborate reply.

In order to discover what Mr O.-D. is aiming at—which, barring his obvious desire to condemn my mode of defence, I am quite at a loss to perceive—let us separate his remarks, so as to see what each amounts to. In the first place, then, he speaks of my "reply to a letter taking somewhat the form of a challenge." Now this not very clear sentence seems to indicate Muddywater as the challenger; whereas, if I mistake not, Mr O.-D. wishes to make your readers believe that it is in *my* letter the said challenge is to be found. But it would, I think, require an extremely powerful pair of spectacles to discover in either of my last two letters anything that the utmost ingenuity could contort into a challenge of any conceivable description. Perhaps he may so regard my complaint against Muddywater, of having buckled on his armour for the purpose of destroying what *he* (alone) regards as an inappropriate metaphor, while he leaves unassailed, nay unnoticed, my numerous, direct, and most serious charges against Wagner. This may be regarded as a reasonable or unreasonable complaint, according to the peculiar views of the reader, but it cannot surely be viewed as a challenge. Yet this is the nearest approach to such to be found in either of my letters.

Or does O.-D. wish us to understand that it is from Muddywater the challenge proceeds. If so he must allude to the passage in the letter of his *protégé*, which states that the writer would "feel honoured by a more accurate analysis of the subject." But as such analysis, requisite solely for the edification of the obtuse Muddywater, would necessitate the filling of a large portion of *The Musical World* with, not merely letterpress, but lengthy and numerous musical illustrations, while I think the large majority of your readers will admit that what I have already urged is quite sufficient, until refuted, to satisfy all reasonable beings, such further analysis is undesirable.

Then it would appear that "your correspondent of August 15," whom I find, to my intense grief, to be my unfortunate self, indulges in "abusive argument," the said charge being made in appalling *italics*! With trembling hands and beating heart I searched the fatal letter of August 15 for the evidences of my guilt, when, to my intense relief, the worst that met my gaze were, 1st, my somewhat free translation of the word, Bilgewater, for which my total ignorance of the sublime German language must be my excuse (but, surely, a little good-humoured *badinage* should not be regarded as "abusive argument"); and, 2nd, my speaking of him as being "irate" (was he not evidently so?), his effusion as "extraordinary," his meaning "difficult of comprehension," and his remarks "confused and confusing." But stay! I find I, by an accidental slip of the pen, designated Oissy-Dumaine's *protégé* as "Muddy-brains." Here, then, must be the "abusive argument" in question. But how natural, nay, unavoidable, under the peculiar circumstances, is the evolution here! Bilgewater, Bilgewater (of a ship), free translation, Muddywater, accidental slip, occasioned by coincidence of names and attributes, Muddybrains. I made the *amende honorable*, however—I *apologised*. What more would Oissy-Dumaine demand of me?

We, I and Muddywater, are next charged with having allowed ourselves to be "led from the subject on which we started." Pray what subject did we start on, thou sapient bottle-holder? Was it not the inappropriateness of my metaphor of the skein of worsted? This, which I was quite ready to admit, as being of not the slightest consequence, was the one subject, from which I can discover no departure on either side. But then I do not possess the penetrating vision, the depth of discernment of the doubtless illustrious Oissy-Dumaine; a name so well calculated to inspire a feeling of respect, if not of awe, in the reader.

But why will these unargumentative carpers hide their identity under false signatures? One temptation to such disguise being the opportunity it offers for selecting a name *appropriate* to the occasion (an opportunity our good friend Muddywater so happily availed himself of), I was tempted to search the French dictionary for the purpose of discovering if any *such* motive could have prompted Oissy-Dumaine, and the result was not altogether unsatisfactory. For I there find that *Oiseau* is a bird, a fowl, and your correspon-

dent seems to be possessed of a "soaring ambition," to be a fellow resident I suspect of our friend Moncure D. Conway in the realms of bliss above. *Oison* is a goose, and O. D. is —; no, I dare not face an augmented charge of a "personal amount" (which must be something very dreadful) of abusive argument, which such a translation of your correspondent's name would inevitably provoke. Scarcely less dangerous would it be, I fear, to allude to the words—"Oiseux," idle, lazy; and "Oisif," unoccupied, having nothing to do—as the reason for selecting this singular *nom de plume*. Yet one is almost tempted to imagine that the want of occupation would be the only excuse O.-D. could offer for filling your pages with such "much ado about nothing," while it surely can but be his love of the *dolce far niente* that prevents him from refuting, as he must be so well able to do, some of my numerous arguments against the Wagnerian music, instead of electing himself the umpire in this stupid discussion about a trifling metaphor!

From the latter part of the name, "Dumaine," I can gather but little. If we divest it of its final letter we have, in English, "of the hand," and the only way in which it can be made applicable is by supposing it to indicate its owner's desire to have a hand in this silly business, without possessing the ability to advance anything new or instructive thereon. Again I ask, why do not these champions come out "in the open" and fight fairly, avoiding all such high-sounding, but highly dangerous, fictitious signatures? Jones, Tompkins, Wilkins, and such-like names, are, certainly, not particularly euphonious, but they are honest and unaffected, while no danger to their possessors lurks behind them.

But where is the argument, the "abusive argument," that O.-D. so earnestly deprecates? I can discover no attempt at argument of any description whatever, either in my last letter or in that of Muddywater. Indeed it is this entire absence of argument of which I complain; but the fact is, that when men who are determined to write have nothing to write about, they are compelled to write nonsense, a consideration which naturally brings me to the contemplation of the enormous amount of literary ability exhibited in the phrase, "an almost personal amount of uncalled-for abuse." Were it not that I fear a reiteration of the charge of "abusive argument," I would ask Mr Goosehand (I had almost written "Goosehead," so slippery is this super-satin glazed paper, almost as slippery as was the *Serpentine* ice to "Mozart's masterpiece"); I would, I say, ask Mr G. what a "personal amount" is. I have occasionally heard of personal accounts, but never, till now, of personal amounts. Well, we are never too old to learn, and I will jot this expression down in my note-book for use whenever I may desire to appear particularly "learned."

But I must not overlook the fact that this learned writer sets off against my "almost personal amount of uncalled-for abuse" Muddywater's "zealous sarcasm;" from which I gather that while I have been simply abusive, my friend K. von B. has been withering me with sarcasm out of pure zeal for Wagner. But, as I have just proved, the only matter in my letter that could sustain the charge against me of "abusive argument" was my playful sarcasm relative to my critic's *nom de plume* and peculiar metaphors, while it is these same sarcastic remarks which have excited the virtuous indignation of Goosehand. Pray pardon, Mr Editor, this somewhat free translation of your correspondent's signature, but so thoroughly patriotic am I, so very English, that I cannot bring myself to write even proper names in a foreign language. Allow me, then, to ask this gentleman why he is to admire the zealous sarcasm of Muddywater in defending (had he condescended to do so) his beloved Wagner, while he so severely condemns my equally zealous defence of Beethoven, Mozart, &c., who, besides being fellow-countrymen of Messrs Wagner and Bilgewater, were equally entitled to protection and respect? I advocate the cause of the more ancient Germans by means of a long series of grave and carefully-considered arguments, while Muddywater contents himself with a simple expression of opinion, about which no living soul desires to quarrel with him. Yet the self-elected umpire, Goosehand, expresses his ill-disguised admiration for the latter and perfectly undisguised disapprobation of the former?

By the way, would it be a breach of press etiquette were I to express a suspicion that these two fictitious correspondents, these highly conscientious objectors, Messrs Muddywater and Goosehand, are one and the same person? I am led to this belief by the fact of the style of the two letters being almost identical; the language, mode of procedure, avoidance of all argument, peculiarity of illustration, &c., being singularly similar. The "little game," supposing my notion to be correct, is not at all bad; and the change of name, from an ugly German to a pretty-looking French one, combined with a seemingly mild censure of Muddywater's pardonable enthusiasm ("zealous sarcasm"), form a good "blind" for your readers.

It was my intention to have commented on the remaining peculiar remarks of Goosehand (would not *Cat's-paw* have been, under the

circumstances, a more appropriate *nom de plume*?), such as, "a closer friendship with both the subjects," which might prove my argument (which?) to be false; the singular transformation of a lining into a coating, and thence into "a thick staff" of knowledge (in order, I presume, to exhibit the writer's extensive acquaintance with the *Meistersinger*); the excessively learned but unmeaning expressions, "out of the literary diapason," and "no frontier of policy"; the testimony of numberless amateurs (how conclusive such testimony!); my "unexampled breach of form" in the use of a "violent vocabulary," &c. I had intended to criticize these very closely, but, having already occupied so large a share of your interesting journal in this senseless discussion, I feel bound to restrain my pen. Therefore, leaving friend Goosehand to point out the "serious argument" which my "violent vocabulary" so utterly shattered, I will conclude by subscribing myself yours very truly,

THOMAS REYNOLDS.

[The "metaphor of the skein of worsted" threatens further complications. We would counsel a truce between the sapient constants. *Jam satis*.—Ed. M. W.]

—o—

MUSIC AT BUXTON.

The divine art still flourishes in its classical and popular forms to assuage the sufferings of the many who resort to this salubrious region for relief from their physical ailments. Low art is continually represented by dances of all descriptions, marches, operatic selections, and German jumbles of manifold beginnings and endings that are more diverse than diverting. High art has of late been thoroughly manifested in a capital performance of the "Jupiter" Symphony, which was duly recognized; and we have had a selection from Beethoven's Septet; an instrumental arrangement of Mendelssohn's "Sons of Art"; Spohr's Dramatic Concerto, capably played by Mr Gahler, a member of the band; Auber's overtures to *Zanetta*, and several other operas, Rossini's to the *Italiana in Algieri*, *Semiramide*, and the *Barbiere*, G. A. Macfarren's *Don Quixote* and *Robin Hood*; a portion, for the third time, of Walter Macfarren's Symphony in B flat; Haydn's "Roxalana" Symphony, which is as remarkable for the rarity of its performance in London as it is for its masterly merit; and Mendelssohn's Pianoforte Concerto in G minor, which gave occasion for the capital playing of Miss Dora Bright, one of the most distinguished pupils of the Royal Academy of Music, who did credit to herself, her school, and the composition, and was received with the hearty warmth she fully deserved. For singers we have had Miss Amy Foster, a favourite pupil of the late Mdme Sainton, Miss Hope Glenn, and Mr Joseph Maas. The programmes are judiciously selected, and the performances effectively conducted by Mr Karl Meyder.

The experience of the Buxton concerts opens a grave consideration which claims the care of those who are concerned and those who are interested in the state of music in England. This is as to why the director of the concerts here and the majority of the band should not be natives of our own country. Doubt cannot exist that we have indigenous talent competent to the fulfilment of all the duties in question; the fact that many of our regimental bands frequently give performances within doors with the parts for violins and basses effectively represented on the instruments for which they are written, shows the possibility for denizens of our own land as much as for foreigners to be doubly capable of concert performances under a roof and of the execution of "harmonie musik" in the open air. Hence, while all sensible persons should rejoice in the opportunity of hearing good music well played by whoever may be the executors, it would be gratifying to political economists if our qualified compatriots not only applauded but followed in other places of holiday resort the example of the musical doings in Buxton.

THE ROYAL AQUARIUM.—Perhaps one of the most imposing sights now, and for some time to come, will be the interior of the Royal Aquarium. Saturday evening, September 5th, was the first special night of the season, inaugurating what is called "The Palace of Ten Thousand Lights." But for once the name does not do justice to the scene, for there must be nearer twice that number of lights to make up the brilliant, striking, and unique illuminations of the vast building. And now, when the eyes can take in the *tout ensemble*, it is at once evident that the illuminations form only a part of the pleasing arrangements. Flowers abound everywhere, and tasteful curtains, draperies, carpets, lounges, and countless other improvements (together with a great many finishing touches still in course of completion) have transformed this ever popular resort into what Mr de Pinna is intent upon making it, the leading place of amusement in England.

FOREIGN BUDGET.

(From Correspondents.)

SCHWERIN.—The statement that Herr Hill, many years a member of the operatic company at the Grand-Ducal Theatre here, has undertaken the management of the Stadttheater, Nuremberg, is incorrect. Herr Hill has been confounded with Herr Paul Hiller, the baritone, and son of the late Ferdinand Hiller; it is the latter who has become manager of the Stadttheater in Nuremberg, and also of that in Ulm.

BREMEN.—Herr Senger, the new manager of the Stadttheater, has issued a circular in which he declares he intends paying more attention to the classical operatic repertory than did his predecessor, who was constantly playing Wagnerian works. Among the novelties promised are C. M. v. Weber's *Silvana*; Alb. Dietrich's *Sonntagskind*; and Gluck's *Alceste*. Herr Ant. Seidl is mentioned as one of the three conductors, the other two being Herren Hentschel and Julius Ruthardt.

BERLIN.—At Kroll's Theatre, Herr Perotti brought his highly successful engagement to a close by appearing as Manrico in *Il Trovatore*. During the months of October and November the theatre will be open for Italian opera, under the management of Ferdinand Strakosch, the principal ladies being Signore Donadio and Osta.—Herr J. Firmans has opened the Louisenstädtisches Theater for a winter operatic season at popular prices. The work selected for the first night was Verdi's *Trovatore*.—Arma Senkrah will introduce at one of the Philharmonic Society's Concerts a Romance, by Hector Berlioz, which has never yet been publicly performed in this capital.—It is asserted that, at the express desire of the Emperor Wilhelm, Mdme Christine Nilsson will sing here twice about the middle of next month, and then start on a concert tour, in the course of which she will visit the more important towns of Germany and Austria.—Mdle Dell' Era, *prima ballerina* at the Royal Operahouse, intends leaving that institution and for the future accepting only starring engagements at first-class theatres.

ESSLINGEN.—The Oratorio Association recently gave a concert, under the direction of Professor Christopher Fink, in the Town Church. The programme included various organ compositions played by Professor Fink himself; mixed choruses by Joh. Eckard, Handel, J. S. Bach, and Chr. Fink; Men's Choruses by Fr. Schneider, and from the *Bamberg Psalm Book* of 1707. Mdme Fink sang Al. Stradella's "Church Air" and Handel's "Treuer Heiland," and Herr Claus, Mendelssohn's tenor air: "Doch der Herr leitet die Irrenden recht."

VIENNA.—Julius Hopp, a well known Viennese composer and one of the most witty and prolific farce-writers in this capital, though his productions were not much known beyond it, died on the 28th ult., aged 66. For some time previous to his decease, he was the inmate of a lunatic asylum.

MDME GERSTER.—This lady's company during her American concert tour, under the management of Mr Henry E. Abbey, will include, besides herself, Mdle Lablache, Galassi (baritone), and Mdme Rive-King (pianist). Their number may possibly be augmented by Campanini and Emil Sauret.

SALT LAKE CITY, U. S.—Musicians were very busy here a month since getting up two of the Gilbert-Sullivan operas, *Iolanthe* and *The Mikado*. Mr W. H. Krause, a pupil of the Leipsic Conservatoire, will conduct the former, and Mr Careless, leader of the Tabernacle Choir, the latter work. Sir Arthur Sullivan paid the place a visit not very long ago, and was much pleased at meeting Mr B. B. Young, a friend and former pupil.

NEW YORK.—Messrs Gilbert and Sullivan's *Mikado* was produced on Wednesday, the 19th August, at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, under the management of Mr John Stetson. Carefully rehearsed and admirably put on the stage, it achieved a complete success, and the company, specially brought over from England by Mr D'Oyly Carte, made a most favourable impression.

Ch. Gounod's *Mors et Vita* will be performed across the Atlantic this winter in St Louis, Boston, Philadelphia, Brooklyn, and New York. Theodore Thomas controls the American copyright.

MISS POPPIS ROWE writes to us that she "would feel greatly obliged by our inserting the following paragraph in *The Musical World*." We are loth to refuse the request of the accomplished young composer, although the announcement properly belongs to our advertising columns:—

"Messrs Ascherberg have just published a waltz and a polka, each called 'The Silver Shield.' Both pieces were composed by Miss Poppis Rowe at the request of Miss Amy Roselle (Mrs Arthur Dacre), and they will be performed nightly when Mr Carl Rosa takes the popular play, *The Silver Shield*, round the provinces."

WAIFS.

Verdi has remitted ten per cent this year off his tenants' rents.

Mdme Gerster's American concert tour will probably commence in Boston.

Mdme Louise Pyk, the Swedish vocalist, will revisit New York this autumn.

The French tenor, Prévost, was singing a short time since at Santiago, Chili.

Remenyi, the Hungarian violinist, was giving concerts, a short time ago, in China.

The Sunday Evening Concerts at the Casino, New York, continue to attract large audiences.

Mdme Geistinger will, it is said, perform this season in America with a company of her own.

A new theatre will shortly be completed in Naples. It is to be called the Teatro Salvatore Rosa.

The Stadttheater, Hamburg, opened for the season on the 1st inst. with Wagner's *Tannhäuser*.

According to report, Mdme Minnie Hauk is engaged by Colonel Mapleson for his next American season.

After a long summer trip, Mdme Artôt-de-Padilla has returned to Berlin, and resumed her singing classes there.

Mdme Brandt-Görtz, from the Stadttheater, Hamburg, has been singing at the Grand-Ducal Theatre, Wiesbaden.

Julius Massenet, the composer, has been created an honorary member of the Philharmonic Academy, Bologna.

Mrs Edwards, the heroine of the song, "The Maid of Llangollen," died suddenly on Thursday, at the age of seventy-one.

Peter Benoit has been confined to his bed by illness, but, according to the latest accounts, was going on favourably.

The last artist bearing the celebrated name of Devrient, Mdme Auguste Wagner-Devrient, died lately, aged 81, at Berlin.

An Italian operatic company is performing at the Teatro de la Alhambra, Madrid. The season is limited to thirty nights.

Miss Emma Thursby gave a concert recently in Saratoga, U. S. Antoine de Kontski is engaged as pianist for her tour.

Mdme Parsch-Zikesch, from the Stadttheater, Cologne, has been fulfilling a short engagement at the National Theatre, Prague.

Martha Remmert, Grand-Ducal Chamber-Virtuosa and former pupil of Franz Liszt, leaves Weimar this autumn to settle in Berlin.

Alfred Oelschlegel's buffo opera, *Prinz und Maurer*, first produced in Klagenfurt, will be the next novelty at the National Theatre, Graz.

On the 18th August, Baron Podmaniczky celebrated his tenth anniversary as Intendant of the National Theatre and Operahouse, Pesth.

Herr S. de Lange, lately director of the Men's Choral Association, Cologne, returns to Holland, and will become director of a Choral Association there.

It is rumoured that Joseph Joachim will start in November on a South-German concert-tour, afterwards playing in Paris and other large French towns.

Miss Van Zandt is engaged for twelve concerts and twelve stage-performances this winter at Moscow; she will afterwards make a tour in Scandinavia.

German opera will shortly celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary in Rotterdam by giving gala performances there, as well as in Amsterdam and The Hague.

The French operatic company, under the management of MM. Desuities and Granier, at The Hague, will commence their new season some time this month.

Marianne Eissler, the violinist, with her sister, Emmy Eissler, pianist, and Carl Riese, vocalist, will, during October and November, make a concert-tour in Germany.

Adolf Mohr's opera, *Loreley*, first produced last season at the Stadttheater, Breslau, where it was well received, will be performed this winter in Düsseldorf and Mayence.

Albert Dietrich has composed some incidental music for Shakspeare's *Cymbeline*, and it has been well received when given lately with the play in Bremen, Oldenburg, and Leipsic.

TEUTONIC ECONOMY.—"The Germans are a frugal people," observed an American, after visiting the Berlin Operahouse—so, at least, says *The Musical Courier* of New York—"As soon as the opera was over, a man in front took wads of cotton from his pocket and stopped up his ears to save the music he had paid for."

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